



GUIDELINES FOR FUNDING

JULY 1, 2014 – JUNE 30, 2015

VIRGINIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

1001 East Broad Street, Suite 330
Richmond, VA 23219
804.225.3132 (Voice/TDD)
804.225.4327 (fax)

www.arts.virginia.gov

COMMISSIONERS

Lisa Alderman , Abingdon	6/30/14
Faye Bailey , Portsmouth	6/30/18
Willie Dell , Richmond	6/30/14
Charles G. Ellis , Danville	6/30/16
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Marcia H. Thalheimer , Richmond	6/30/14
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Foster J. Billingsley, Executive Director
Tiffany Glass Ferreria, Arts in Education Coordinator / Webmaster
Susan Horner, Administrative Assistant
Lorraine W. Lacy, Executive Secretary
Cathy Welborn, Program Coordinator
Jenny Wortham, Chief Deputy Director

The Virginia Commission for the Arts is the state agency that supports the arts through funding from the Virginia General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Commission distributes grant awards to artists, arts and other not-for-profit organizations, educational institutions, educators and local governments, and provides technical assistance in arts management.

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INTRODUCTION

Mission

Virginia Commission for the Arts celebrates and champions artistic excellence and encourages growth in artistic creativity, quality and innovation. VCA invests in the arts in the Commonwealth by supporting and encouraging full participation in a creative culture that will benefit all Virginians.

VCA Mandates and Goals

VCA's mission is driven by five mandates that address (1) availability and accessibility to the arts, (2) a commitment to lifelong arts learning and education, (3) a healthy and productive arts infrastructure, (4) the arts as a vital component of the Commonwealth's economy, and (5) an environment that is open and conducive to artistic expression. These mandates and goals are addressed by interconnecting themes that emphasize a strong commitment of support, relationship building and active service to the arts community and citizens of the Commonwealth.

These themes include:

- Enhancing VCA's capacities through improved communications, grants making processes and response systems.
- Increasing resources for the arts through more and better relationships, partnerships and alliances with the public and private sectors.
- Identifying and facilitating synergies within the existing Commonwealth's arts resources for greater impact, sustainability and adaptability.
- Stimulating and advancing a broader and richer dialogue about the role and value of the arts and creativity in the everyday lives of Virginians.

The Virginia Commission for the Arts' Strategic Plan can be downloaded from our website at www.arts.virginia.gov/about_strategic.html

Background on the Commission

The Commission's funds come from the Virginia General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The agency, which was created in 1968, is guided by 13 Commissioners appointed to five-year terms by the Governor and confirmed by the General Assembly. To ensure statewide representation, at least one Commissioner – and no more than two – is appointed from each Congressional district. A full-time staff of four and part-time staff of two implements programs and policies. The Commission is assisted by a statewide network of advisory panelists.

The 2014-2015 Guidelines for Funding, presented in the following pages, describe the grant programs of the agency. The Guidelines cover activities taking place between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015. This document reflects the advice of many of the constituents of the Commission. The agency encourages anyone in Virginia to comment on its programs and services by writing, calling, or e-mailing the Commission office at any time during the year.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE COMMISSION

Artistic Quality

Supporting and stimulating excellence in the arts throughout Virginia is the responsibility of the Commission.

Artistic quality is the first consideration in the decision to fund any arts organization or arts activity. The Commission supports artistic excellence where it already exists, encourages growth in artistic quality, and works to make this artistic excellence available to all Virginians.

The advisory panels make evaluations of artistic quality. The Commission chooses the panelists for their knowledge of and experience in the arts. They attend activities of the Commission grantees and have first-hand knowledge of the quality of the work of the organizations.

Access to the Arts

The Commission strives to make quality arts experiences available and accessible to all Virginians, regardless of age, ability, gender, geographic location, race, or socio-economic status. The Commission supports existing arts organizations in all parts of the Commonwealth and encourages new organizations that serve people with limited access to the arts.

In addition, the Commission makes a substantial investment in performing arts touring each year as a way of increasing the availability of high quality arts throughout the Commonwealth.

All applicants are expected to consider the needs and abilities of special populations, such as geography, age, gender, race and socio-economic status when planning their programs.

Diversity

The Commission believes that it is through the arts we celebrate the diverse cultures of this country.

The Commission funds arts organizations, artists, and arts activities that preserve and present the many cultures of contemporary life in the Commonwealth.

Commission grantees that are serving racially, ethnically, and/or culturally diverse communities are expected to actively seek racial, ethnic, and/or cultural diversity in their artists, audiences, boards, and staff. Applications for funding should fully describe all efforts to create this diversity.

Assistance to Individual Artists

The Commission relies on a healthy, vital and productive arts infrastructure that supports Virginia's individual artists, arts entrepreneurs, businesses and institutions.

The Commission provides leadership in supporting the arts infrastructure of artists and arts professionals in their development and ability to support themselves through their work.

Additionally, the Commission supports artist retreats, access centers for equipment and studio/rehearsal space, and organizations that provide information and advisory services for individual artists.

Development of Arts Organizations

The Commission provides ongoing support for established arts organizations and helps in the development of new arts organizations which fill a community need. In deciding which organizations to support, the Commission looks for high standards of artistic quality and management, as well as the amount of local commitment to an organization in terms of attendance and financial support.

The Commission funds both professional and nonprofessional organizations that strive for artistic excellence. The Commission defines a "professional" organization as one composed of, hiring, or serving artists who earn or endeavor to earn their living through the practice of their art.

The Commission provides technical assistance to arts organizations by paying for staff and board members to attend workshops and seminars and funding short term consultations on management problems.

The Commission views its financial assistance role to arts groups as that of a catalyst, helping to strengthen private and local support of the arts. The Commission believes in a diversified funding base for arts organizations.

Organizations receiving funding from the Commission are expected to earn as much income from ticket sales/admission fees as possible, while seeking contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, and government. This philosophy recognizes that government resources are limited while demands for services are high, and that the arts are healthier when open to diverse influences and not financially dependent on any single source of support.

Some arts organizations exist to present the work of one artistic leader and are not intended to continue after that leader is gone. Other, equally worthy arts organizations have a more broad-based artistic philosophy and are intended to continue serving their communities beyond the tenure of the original artistic leader. The Commission strongly encourages this second group of organizations to build cash reserve funds and endowment funds to ensure financial stability in the future.

Arts Education

The Commission values and promotes the arts as a key element in lifelong learning and recognizes the essential role of arts learning and education in the intellectual and creative growth of Virginians of all ages.

The Commission serves as an advocate for arts education systems and experiences that will ignite imaginations and creativity for all of Virginia's children. The study of the arts should be a part of the education of every young person, whether that student grows up to be a performer, a scientist, or an athlete. A complete curriculum in the arts includes both training in performance and in the creation of art work.

The Commission's **Artists in Education Program** provides school students (preK-12) in Virginia with opportunities for live and direct experiences with professional artists in a school setting and in after-school or summer activities. None of these educational resources, however, take the place of sequential, curriculum-based arts instruction delivered by certified arts teachers. These supplemental arts programs reinforce and expand upon the arts curricula.

ADVISORY PANELS

To help in making decisions on grant applications to artists and arts organizations, the Commission has established seven regional advisory panels (see map page 25), one statewide panel for major arts institutions, one statewide panel for the Performing Arts Tour Directory, one statewide panel for Artists in Education Grants, and one statewide panel for Artist Fellowships.

Each of the seven regional advisory panels and the statewide panels consist of seven to nine members appointed by the Commission. The panelists are local artists, arts administrators, trustees of arts organizations, arts educators, and arts supporters. They are chosen for their expertise in the arts, their ability to work with others in a panel situation, and their willingness to devote the time required to review applications. In making appointments to the panels the Commission attempts to balance each panel with knowledge of the different arts disciplines and diverse cultural perspectives.

Panelists make recommendations on grant applications; evaluate activities funded by the Commission, and make recommendations on the Commission's policies and procedures. They are appointed for one-year terms and may be reappointed twice to serve a maximum of three years.

Nominations for the advisory panels may be submitted to the Executive Director at any time during the year. Each nomination is kept on file for three years. A list of current panelists is available from the Commission office and on the Commission website.

GRANT PROGRAMS: GENERAL POLICIES

Basic Eligibility

The Virginia Commission for the Arts awards grants to Virginia organizations which:

- are not-for-profit and exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(a), which includes the 501(c)3 designation, of the Internal Revenue code, or are units of government, or are educational institutions, or are local chapters of tax exempt national organizations;
- produce, present, or support in Virginia, dance, literary arts, media arts, music, theater, visual, and related arts;
- comply with Title VI, Section 601, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which states that no person, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.
- comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which state that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Actions of the General Assembly

All Commission programs and grant amounts are subject to change, based upon action on the state budget by the Virginia General Assembly and by the Office of the Governor.

Acknowledgment

In all published material regarding the particular activity supported, acknowledgment must be made that the activity is partially supported by a grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. The purpose of crediting the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts is to provide

Citizens with an accurate picture of the broad range of arts activities supported by their tax dollars. The logo of the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as funding credit can be downloaded from the Commission website (www.arts.virginia.gov). This acknowledgment should be included in programs, print and online newsletters, educational materials, brochures, posters, news releases, web sites, catalogues, and videos.

Amount of Assistance

Refer to each grant category for maximum grant amounts and matching requirements.

Low priority will be given to organizations that do not show strong efforts to seek multiple funding resources. Applicants are expected to charge a reasonable fee when appropriate rather than offer free events.

Support for an organization or project does not imply future Commission support. Application must be made each year and will be considered in relation to applications submitted by all other organizations. All Commission grants are subject to funds available.

Grant Contract

Each grant application must be signed by an individual with the authority to act on behalf of the applicant organization. A signed application form is the applicant's agreement to do what is described in the application and to comply with the Grant Conditions, a copy of which is attached to each application form. Applicants must attach a signed copy of the Certification of Assurances to the application and keep a copy on file.

When the Commission awards a grant, a letter is sent to the applicant with the payment schedule for that grant. Major changes in activities, personnel, or budget must be approved in advance by the Commission.

Reporting Requirements

The Commission requires a final report on each grant within 30 days of the end of the grant period, or no later than June 1. Final report forms, if required, are mailed with grant award letters and may also be downloaded from the Commission website.

Each grantee must maintain accurate financial records for any activity supported by Commission funds. The Commission or its authorized representative shall have access to these records.

The Commission requires General Operating support grantees that have income of over \$600,000 for at least two consecutive years to submit an opinioned, independent audit of their financial records every year.

Lobbying

No part of a Virginia Commission for the Arts grant shall be used for any activity intended to influence a member of Congress or the General Assembly to favor or oppose any legislation.

Ineligible Activities

The Virginia Commission for the Arts does not fund:

- activities restricted to an organization's membership
- costs of parties, receptions, fund-raising benefits, etc.
- endowments, capital campaigns
- activities that are primarily religious in purpose
- college or university-based projects that are part of a required course or curriculum, that do not involve and serve a significant non-student population, or that are for activities that are otherwise available in the community
- general operating support for historic celebrations or community promotional activities
- applications to reduce or eliminate existing deficits
- arts activities / programs that have started or already occurred
- activities or programs that take place outside Virginia with the exception of the technical assistance grant.
- vocal and musical ensembles that perform primarily pop, Broadway, or barbershop music, or that focus primarily on competitions

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT FOR ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

(See General Policies)

Purpose

Assist organizations of artistic merit in fulfilling their missions by providing funds to maintain their stability and encourage their advancement.

Description

These grants provide general operating support to Virginia arts organizations to continue, strengthen, and expand their programs.

Eligible Applicants

Virginia organizations whose primary purpose is the arts (excluding units of government and educational institutions and their private companion foundations), that have an independent governing board, that meet the Basic Eligibility criteria, and that are exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Organizations must be incorporated in Virginia before applying for General Operating Support and must have completed three years of programming. Applicants for General Operating Support are required to present at least three different programs or services for the public in Virginia each year.

A Virginia arts organization is defined as one whose primary purpose is the arts, that is incorporated in the state, and that has its headquarters and home season, or activities equivalent to a home season for non-producing organizations, in the state.

Applicants that are at least three years old must have a previous year's income of at least \$10,000 in cash. Organizations with smaller budgets may be eligible to apply for Project Grants or Technical Assistance.

NOTE: Organizations receiving General Operating Support are not eligible for Project Grant funding.

Avocational Organizations. Priority in this funding program will be given to organizations that pay artists. Avocational organizations may be funded in this program if they provide specific services or programs that would otherwise not be available in that particular geographic area. Avocational organizations may apply in the other grant programs of the Commission.

Festivals. In order to be eligible for General Operating Support a festival must be a separately incorporated Virginia organization with a year-round administrative staff and a year round presence in the community; have as its primary purpose the arts, spend the majority of its budget on arts activities; last longer than three consecutive days; hire professional artists; and include education and outreach programs as part of the festival. Other festivals may apply for Project Grants and Touring Assistance.

Educational Organizations. Organizations that exist primarily to provide arts education should meet the following criteria:

- The instructors should be professionals or former professionals in their fields
- Classes should be aimed at acquiring skills at ever-increasing levels of difficulty
- Classes should be focused on development of skills rather than being primarily rehearsals for a performance
- The organization should have a diversified funding base, beyond tuition and ticket sales for public performances, that shows wide-spread community support
- Scholarships should be available for low income students. There should be an active effort to recruit students from all segments of the community
- In addition to instruction, there should be regular opportunities for students to perform or exhibit for the public

Vocal and Musical Ensembles. Vocal and musical ensembles that perform primarily pop, Broadway, or barbershop music, or that focus primarily on competitions are not eligible for General Operating Support but are eligible to apply for Project Grants for new initiatives or for Technical Assistance.

Diversity. Applicants that are serving racially, ethnically, and/or culturally diverse communities are expected to actively seek racial, ethnic, and/or cultural diversity in their artists, audiences, boards, and staff. Applications for funding should fully describe all efforts to create this diversity.

Diversified Funding Base. Applicants are expected to earn as much income from ticket sales/admission fees as possible, while seeking contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, and government, as well as income from special fund-raising activities. This philosophy recognizes that government resources are limited while demands for services are high and that the arts are healthier when open to diverse influences and not financially dependent on any single source of support.

Eligible Activities

- Special projects
- Maintenance / operation costs
- On-going programming

Deadline

March 1, 2014, for expenses occurring between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015

The Commission awards all General Operating Support Grants for a one year period. Each grantee is required to submit an application annually.

Organizations that have been funded by the Commission in the General Operating Support category in past years will be notified by the Commission in early January what information will be required for the March application deadline. If the grant is awarded, the organization must submit a year-end report no later than June 1 of each year in order to receive the second payment for the grant. [Failure to submit a final report by June 1 will impact future funding in the next grant year.](#)

If an organization undergoes a substantive change in its mission, its artistic leadership, or its management during the grant period, the Commission must be notified immediately. If in the opinion of the Commission such changes alter the purpose for which the grant was awarded, the Commission may require the organization to submit justification for continuing to receive the grant funds.

Amount of Assistance

Organizations approved for funding will receive no more than 10% of their previous year's cash income, less Commission support, [commissions to artists](#), [facility rental income for non-arts activities](#), money paid to the organization for out-of-state trips or tours by the people taking the trips or tours, and money raised for capital purposes in the previous year. Most organizations will receive less than the maximum, and no organization is guaranteed a specific funding amount. Minimum grant awards will be \$500 per year; maximum grant awards will be \$200,000 per year.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications

- Artistic excellence
- Effective management
- Public service and public benefit to the community

Artistic Excellence is the first and most important standard of review. The organization has high-quality activities that achieve a distinct artistic vision consistent with the applicant's mission and goals. The Commission supports organizations with a wide variety of artistic programs, including both the preservation of an artistic heritage and the presentation of new works and new artists.

Effective Management is measured by the organization's capacity to effectively manage its operations and resources as reflected by organizational stability and fiscal position. The organization has a sound business planning process that shows evidence that the organization is maximizing its opportunities to generate earned income and contributed income. The organization has a strong board composition, staff qualifications, and clearly articulated roles and responsibilities.

Public Service and Public Benefit to the Community includes efforts to expand the applicant's reach through partnerships that work to make the arts a vital part of community life. The organization has a commitment to arts education for Virginians of all ages as part of or beyond the organization's regular programming. The organization makes the arts a vital part of economic development for the organization's home community, its region or the state.

In evaluating the applications, the Commission will take into account whether the requested grant will result in significant programs for the community that could not be provided within the applicant's existing financial resources. The Commission will also evaluate the general merits of each application relative to others being considered.

NOTE: The Commission requires General Operating Support grantees, that have income of over \$600,000 for at least two consecutive years, to submit an opinioned, independent audit of their financial records every year.

Application/Review/Payment Procedure

1. Applicants submit the information requested by the Commission each year. The Commission staff is available for consultation on applications, and to review drafts of applications before the application deadline. If assistance is needed, contact the Commission office at least four weeks before the deadline. Organizations planning to apply to the Commission should put the panelists and Commissioners on their mailing lists.
2. Applicants submit completed application forms by the deadline (not a postmark deadline). NO EXCEPTIONS. The Commission will not accept any application materials via facsimile transmission or other electronic means (e.g. e-mail).
3. The Commission staff reviews each application for completeness and eligibility. Incomplete or ineligible applications will not be reviewed and will be returned to the applicant with a brief explanation.
4. Copies of the applications are sent to the members of the appropriate advisory panels.
5. The panelists independently review each application prior to the panel meeting.
6. Each advisory panel meets with two members of the Commission staff. Commissioners attend each panel meeting as observers. Applicant representatives may attend panel meetings as observers but may not make a presentation to the panel. The panels make their recommendations after group discussion. Names of Commissioners and advisory panelists, as well as dates and locations of Commission and panel meetings, are available from the Commission office and on the Commission website. Applicants are encouraged to invite the panelists and Commissioners to their public arts events in advance of the panel meetings.
7. Following the panel meetings, the Commission staff makes a recommendation on each application.
8. The board of the Commission then reviews the recommendations of the panels and staff and takes final action on the applications.
9. Applicants are notified of Commission action by mail. The appeals process for applications not awarded funds can be found in the appeals section of the guidelines.
10. The Commission will generally pay 85 percent of each year's grant amount by the first of August. The final 15 percent will be paid within 30 days after the Commission receives the final report on the grant. The Commission reserves the right to use an alternative payment schedule in special circumstances. Final reports must be submitted after the completion of all funded activities and before June 1st.

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT FOR MAJOR ARTS INSTITUTIONS

Organizations that meet the standards described below will be reviewed by a statewide, multidisciplinary panel in alternating years. These organizations will follow the same guidelines and application procedures as other applicants for General Operating Support.

In addition, Major Arts Institutions must have the following:

- Have significant economic and artistic impact in its region of the state
- Must pay its performers. Organizations that have the purpose of presenting the visual arts must have professional curators who select the work to be shown. These organizations may not charge fees to artists for the exhibition of their work.
- Employ full time administrative staff
- Have boards of directors with the authority and skills to guide the organization
- Have been reviewed and approved for full funding in operating support from the Commission for at least four years prior to being considered by the Commission to be a major arts institution
- Have previous year's cash income of at least \$1,500,000. Substantial income for non-arts activities, such as facility rental income, is not included in the income minimum
- Have education/outreach programs
- Have opinioned, independent audits of their financial records each year

TECHNICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Purpose

Assist arts organizations in improving their artistic quality, community service, or management.

Description

These grants are designed to provide outside help for arts organizations on particular problems. The Commission staff will help organizations find the appropriate consultants or workshops for their needs, if requested.

Eligible Applicants

Virginia organizations whose primary purpose is the arts, local arts agencies that are units of local government, and public art programs (excluding other units of government and educational institutions) and that meet the Basic Eligibility criteria.

The organizations must be incorporated in the state and have their headquarters and home seasons, or activities equivalent to a home season for non-producing organizations, in the state.

Eligible Activities

- Short-term consultations on particular artistic or organizational problems, with the staff of the applicant organization carrying out the resulting plan of action
- Sending administrators, board members, and other authorized representatives to conferences or seminars which will increase job effectiveness

Deadline

Applications are accepted throughout the year, at least four weeks before the proposed activity occurring between July 1, 2014, and June 15, 2015.

Amount of Assistance

Up to \$1,000 each (non-matching), total not to exceed \$2,000 per year. Grants are awarded from available funds on a first-come, first-served basis.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications

- Need by applicant organization for the proposed activity
- Financial need of the organization for the requested grant

Application/Review/Payment Procedure

1. Applicants submit application forms at least four weeks before the proposed activity. The Commission does not accept application materials via facsimile transmission or other electronic means (e.g. e-mail).
2. The Commission staff reviews proposals. Notice of decisions is generally prompt.
3. After receiving confirmation of a grant, the grantee may proceed with the activity. Upon receipt of the final report, the Commission will authorize payment to the grantee.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHALLENGE GRANTS

Purpose

Encourage local governments to support the arts.

Description

The Commission will match, up to \$5,000, subject to funds available, the tax monies given by independent town, city, and county governments to arts organizations. The money, which does not include school arts budgets or arts programming by parks and recreation departments, may be granted either by a local arts commission/council or directly by the governing board.

Eligible Applicants

Independent city, town, or county governments in Virginia.

Eligible Activities

Grants to independent arts organizations for arts activities in the locality. The Commission does not match payments paid to performers for specific performances. Local governments seeking such funding should apply in the Performing Arts Touring Assistance Program.

Deadline

April 1, 2014, for local government grants awarded in 2014-2015.

NOTE: A local government that has not approved its budget by the grant deadline may apply conditionally and confirm the application as soon as possible.

Amount of Assistance

Up to \$5,000, subject to funds available. Local government match must be from local government funds; federal funds may not be included.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications

- Artistic quality of the organizations supported by the city/county/town
- Clearly defined policies and procedures for awarding local funds to arts organizations
- Degree of involvement of artists and arts organizations in the local process of awarding grants
- Responsiveness to community needs
- Evidence of local government support of the arts

Application/Review/Payment Procedures

1. Local governments submit complete application forms by the deadline (not a postmark deadline). The Commission does not accept application materials via facsimile transmission or other electronic means (e.g. e-mail).
2. The Commission staff reviews each application for completeness and eligibility.
3. The Commission staff makes recommendations on levels of funding for each application.
4. The Commission board reviews the staff recommendations and takes final action on the applications.
5. After confirmation of the grant award, each local government will confirm in writing to the Commission that its governing board has appropriated the matching funds and the funds from the Commission. This confirmation must take the form of the appropriate page of the local government's approved 2014 - 2015 budget or a copy of the check (s) to the subgrantee (s). The Commission will pay the grant in full after receiving this confirmation by February 1, 2015.

NOTE: Organizations receiving Project Grant funding are not eligible for General Operating funding.

PROJECT GRANTS

Purpose

To facilitate new and innovative art projects with the potential to lead to other innovations.

Description

This grant program is open to any not-for-profit organization, unit of government, or educational institution presenting the arts. These grants are designed to engage the community and encourage collaboration among other organizations with innovative artistic concepts. The Commission will not support the same project for more than three years.

Eligible Applicants

Virginia not-for-profit organizations, units of government, or educational institutions that meet the Basic Eligibility criteria. Each department of a college or university is considered to be a separate applicant.

Eligible Activities

- Commissions of new works of art
- Operating support for new and emerging arts organizations (organizations whose primary purpose is the arts, that are three years old or less, and that had a previous year's income of less than \$50,000)
- New or expanded performances or exhibitions
- Services to artists and arts organizations, such as research studies, shared administrative and/or technical services, professional development workshops, and shared promotional materials

NOTE:

- General operating support or annual budgets for established organizations are not considered projects and are ineligible
- Applications from colleges/universities should be for activities not otherwise available in the community
- Projects from colleges that are primarily for academic credit are not eligible
- Commission grants to any established arts organization in one year will total no more than 30 percent of that organization's income for the previous year. Most grantees receive much less than 30 percent of their income in Commission grants.

Deadline

March 1, 2014, for projects taking place between July 1, 2014, and June 15, 2015

Amount of Assistance

Applicants may submit more than one application for combined total of \$10,000 and must provide at least a one-to-one cash match of the requested grant.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications

- Artistic quality of the proposed project
- Extent to which the proposed project engages the needs of the community and/or state
- Effective management of the applicant organization
- Cost effectiveness of the proposed project
- Consideration of long-term impact

Fiscal Agents

A not-for-profit, tax-exempt Virginia organization or government unit may act as fiscal agent for a Project Grant request by an individual or organization that is not tax-exempt or not incorporated in Virginia. The fiscal agent must sign the application and, if a grant is received, is legally responsible for the completion of the project and for the proper management of the grant funds. The Commission requires that a fiscal agent have a written agreement with the individual or organization that will actually administer the project, to avoid misunderstandings. The Commission requires a signed copy of the written agreement between the two parties as part of the application. The fiscal agent may not have a staff member affiliated with any of the project, either as an employee or in a policy making role such as serving on the board of directors.

Application Review/Payment Procedures

1. Applicants submit the information requested by the Commission each year. The Commission staff is available for consultation on applications, and to review drafts of applications before the application deadline. If assistance is needed, contact the Commission office at least four weeks before the deadline. Organizations planning to apply to the Commission should put the panelists and Commissioners on their mailing lists.
2. Applicants submit completed application forms by the deadline (not a postmark deadline). NO EXCEPTIONS. The Commission will not accept any application materials via facsimile transmission or other electronic means (e.g. e-mail).
3. The Commission staff reviews each application for completeness and eligibility. Incomplete or ineligible applications will not be reviewed and will be returned to the applicant with a brief explanation.
4. Copies of the applications are sent to the members of the appropriate advisory panels.
5. The panelists independently review each application prior to the panel meeting.
6. Each advisory panel meets with two members of the Commission staff. Commissioners attend each panel meeting as observers. Applicant representatives may attend panel meetings as observers but may not make a presentation to the panel. The panels make their recommendations after group discussion. Names of Commissioners and advisory panelists, as well as dates and locations of Commission and panel meetings, are available from the Commission office and on the Commission website. Applicants are encouraged to invite the panelists and Commissioners to their arts events for the public in advance of the panel meetings.

PERFORMING ARTS TOURING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Purpose

Increase opportunities for Virginians to experience high-quality performing arts events.

Description

This grant program supports touring by Virginia performing artists and ensembles within the state. The touring activities are restricted to those listed in the Commission's annual Tour Directory. Any not-for-profit organization meeting the Basic Eligibility criteria can apply to receive a touring assistance grant to support these activities. Grants are made to the presenter, not to the touring artist(s). Touring artists apply to be listed in the Tour Directory, with a set dollar amount reserved to support their touring, as outlined below. To be eligible for funding, performances must take place in Virginia but outside of the performer's home base. Any activity underwritten with Commission touring assistance funds must be open to the public, and the presenter must provide community-wide publicity. Elementary and secondary schools, senior living facilities, correctional facilities, and hospitals are exempt from this Commission requirement.

INFORMATION FOR PERFORMERS AND ENSEMBLES SEEKING TO BE LISTED IN THE TOUR DIRECTORY

Eligible Applicants

Virginia performing artists and performing arts ensembles. Individual students or organizations whose members are primarily PK-12 or undergraduate college students are not eligible for inclusion in the Tour Directory.

Eligible Activities

- Programs listed in the Performing Arts Tour Directory, which take place outside of the home area of the touring artist(s)
- Programs should be open to the public, and the presenter must provide community-wide publicity. Elementary and secondary schools, senior living facilities, correctional facilities, and hospitals may be exempt from this requirement.

Deadline for Artists

July 15, 2014, for the touring season of July 1, 2015, to June 15, 2016

Criteria for Evaluating Applications

- Artistic excellence
- Effective management
- Availability of similar touring programs in the state
- Cost-effectiveness of the proposed tour
- Evidence of presenter interest in the proposed tour
- Impact of the proposed tour on the career of the touring artist or organization

NOTE: If the Commission allocates less than \$25,000 for any artist or ensemble for the 2015-2016 tour, that artist/ensemble is eligible to compete for unused touring funds after December 1, 2015, up to a total allocation for the year of \$25,000. If the Commission allocates \$25,000 or more for any artist's/ensemble's 2015-2016 tour, that artist/ensemble will not be eligible to compete for unused touring funds after December 1.

Application/Review Procedures for Touring Artists and Ensembles Wishing To Be Listed in the Tour Directory

1. The artist/ensemble should submit a complete application to the Commission by the deadline. The Commission does not accept application materials via facsimile transmission or other electronic means (e.g. e-mail).
2. The Touring Program advisory panel will consider the proposals and make recommendations to the Commission. The Commission will approve artists/ensembles for touring support and reserve a block of funds for each. Decisions will be announced in October 2014.
3. The funding reserved by the Commission for each touring artist/ensemble will be held for potential presenters from March 15, 2015, until December 1, 2015.
4. In the fall of 2014 the Commission [will post the 2015-2016 Tour Directory on its website](#) with information about artists and ensembles eligible for touring support and descriptions of their touring programs.
5. The Commission will begin accepting touring assistance applications from presenters on March 15, 2015. Applications submitted before that date will be returned.

6. Presenters send applications for touring support, including copies of signed contracts with touring artists/ensembles, to the Virginia Commission for the Arts. Applications must be received by the Commission at least four weeks prior to the event and no later than December 1.
 7. The Virginia Commission for the Arts awards touring support grants to presenters of a particular artist/ensemble on a first-come, first-served basis from that artist's/ensemble's allocation. Grant award letters are generally mailed two weeks after receipt of each presenter's application by the Commission.
 8. If an artist/ensemble listed in the 2014-2015 Tour Directory has booked a tour and used all of its original allocation prior to December 1, 2015, it may book additional performances and encourage the presenters to apply to the Commission's "wait list" on a first-come first-served basis for funds which have gone unused by other artists/ensembles. It is the responsibility of the artist/ensemble to explain that there is no guarantee of funding in this situation.
 9. After December 1, 2015, the Commission will pool any uncommitted touring funds and award them to presenters on the "wait list", or other presenters which apply to support activities of eligible artists/ensembles. Wait list performances must take place between December 5 and June 15 of each touring season.
- NOTE:** Artists/Ensembles which are awarded an allotment of \$25,000 or greater may not receive any additional support under the procedure in #8 and #9.
10. No applications for funding will be accepted after December 1.

INFORMATION FOR PRESENTERS OF VIRGINIA TOURING ARTISTS/ENSEMBLES

Eligible Applicants

Virginia not-for-profit organizations, units of local government, or educational institutions that meet the Basic Eligibility criteria.

Eligible Activities

- Programs listed in the Tour Directory which take place [at least 30 miles from home base of the artist/ensemble](#)
- Programs should be open to the public, and the presenter must provide community-wide publicity. Elementary and secondary schools, senior living facilities, correctional facilities, and hospitals may be exempt from this requirement.

Deadline

Presenters should send applications for touring support, including copies of signed contracts with touring artists/ensembles, to the Commission at least four weeks prior to the event, and before December 1.

Amount of Assistance

The Commission will fund up to 50 percent of the performance fee for any touring program listed in the Virginia Commission for the Arts Tour Directory, subject to the overall limit for each touring artist/ensemble. Grant amounts are a minimum of \$100.

Application/Review/Payment Procedures for Presenters

1. In the fall the Virginia Commission for the Arts distributes its Tour Directory, listing basic information about the artists and ensembles eligible for tour support and descriptions of the touring program for the following July 1 - June 15 time period.
2. Touring artists/ensembles and presenters begin scheduling and signing contracts. All negotiations regarding type and schedule of activities, fees, technical needs and promotional efforts are the responsibility of each touring artist/ensemble and its presenters, and the resulting arrangements should be included in the contract.

The Commission's grant, however, will not exceed 50 percent of the contracted performance fee. Fees and all local costs are the responsibility of the presenters. A presenter's total costs will depend on the touring artist's/ensemble's fee, facility costs, promotion costs, and other local factors.

Each contract must contain language referring to the requested amount of presenter touring assistance.
3. Presenters send applications for touring support, including copies of signed contracts with touring artists/ensembles, to the Virginia Commission for the Arts at least four weeks before an event and before December 1. The Commission does not accept application materials via facsimile transmission or other electronic means (e.g. e-mail).
4. The Commission awards touring support grants to presenters of a particular artist/ensemble on a first-come, first-served basis from that artist's/ensemble's allocation. Presenters should not consider touring grants automatic but should wait for confirmation. Grant award letters are generally mailed two weeks after receipt of each contract by the Commission.
5. For grant awards of over \$150 the Commission will send 85 percent of the grant to the presenter before the scheduled touring program. The Commission will pay the final 15 percent of the grant after receiving the final report. For grants of \$100 to \$149 payment will be made after the Commission has received the final report.
6. Presenters submit final reports to the Virginia Commission for the Arts within 30 days after each event.
7. If any presenter receiving subsidy for one of these touring artists/ensembles has actual income in excess of expenses, the presenter must use these additional funds for other arts activities, and the Commission must approve the use of any of these excess funds up to the amount of the grant.

ARTIST FELLOWSHIPS

Purpose

To recognize the creative excellence of individual Virginia artists and to support their pursuit of artistic excellence.

Description

A limited number of fellowships are available to professional creative artists living in Virginia. Funding in this category is highly competitive. Specific arts disciplines will be eligible for support each year on a rotating basis, depending upon the amount of state and federal funding available to the Commission. Artists should confirm with the Commission staff the categories to be funded each year.

Eligible Applicants

Artists who are legal residents of Virginia at the application deadline and who plan to remain in the state for the coming year. A legal resident has a valid Virginia driver's license and/or pays income tax in Virginia and/or is a registered Virginia voter. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age. An individual may apply in only one category per year and may receive only one fellowship from the Commission within any four year period.

Deadline

October 1, 2014

Amount of Assistance

\$5,000. Artists are not required to provide matching funds.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications

- Quality of the applicant's work as demonstrated by the work samples submitted
- The applicant's record of professional arts activity and achievement as reflected in the resume
- Potential for the fellowship resulting in significant development in the career of the applicant

Application Review/Payment Procedure

1. Artists submit complete application forms by the October 1, 2014 deadline (This is not a postmark deadline). The Commission does not accept application materials via facsimile transmission or other electronic means, such as e-mail.
2. Applications are reviewed by an advisory panel of professionals in the appropriate discipline. The panels make their recommendations after group discussion.
3. The board of the Commission makes the final decision on all applications.
4. Payment to the artist will be made by January 15, 2015. The amount of the fellowship must be reported as taxable income with the state and Federal tax returns.

ARTISTS IN EDUCATION GRANTS (PK-12)

Purpose

Provide opportunities for [Virginia's students \(PK-12\)](#) throughout Virginia to participate in and learn about the arts by working with high quality professional artists.

Description

These grants provide [Virginia's PK-12 students](#) and teachers' opportunities to work with professional artists either in a school setting or through after-school or summer activities. These grants support educational programs in the arts that enhance arts instruction in the school curriculum. In addition, the grants will support the training of professional artists to work with elementary and secondary students.

Eligible Applicants

- [Virginia's Public PK-12 Schools](#) which meet the basic eligibility criteria of the Virginia Commission for the Arts
- Private, federally tax-exempt schools that meet the basic eligibility criteria of the Virginia Commission for the Arts, including compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Not-for-profit organizations [which meet the basic eligibility criteria of the Virginia Commission for the Arts](#)

Eligible Activities

- [New or expanded](#) artist residencies
- [New or expanded](#) after school or summer arts education programs [facilitated](#) by not-for-profit arts organizations
- [New or expanded](#) training programs for artists who wish to work with [Virginia's PK-12 students](#)

NOTE: Teaching Artists may be proposed in the application with supplemental documentation of the artist's qualifications or selected from the Commission's Artist Roster, available online: www.arts.virginia.gov/roster.html. The grant funds may be used for artist stipends, equipment, supplies, and costs for documenting and/or evaluating program outcome. The Commission will not fund the same activity or the same artist(s) for more than three years without significant program expansion.

Criteria for Funding

- Artistic excellence of the participating artist(s)
- Qualifications of the participating artist(s) for working elementary and secondary student
- Clarity of the program description
- Program planning and evaluation
- Extent to which the proposed activities enhance existing arts education offered [by the applicant](#)
- Cost effectiveness of the proposed activities
- Administrative capacity of the applicant organization

Requirements

- Applications must describe the existing arts education instruction provided by the PK-12 school or arts organizations
- Applications must include a plan for evaluation of learning by the participating students
- Applications must include a description of how the participating artist(s) were recruited and selected
- If the applicant is a not-for-profit arts organization, the application must clearly describe how the proposed activities are different from or an expansion of existing educational activities

Amount of Assistance

Applicants may request a maximum of \$10,000 and must provide at least a one-to-one cash match of the requested grant.

Application/Review/Payment Procedure

1. Applicants submit the information requested by the Commission each year. The Commission staff is available for consultation on applications and to review drafts of applications before the application deadline. If assistance is needed, contact the Commission office at least four weeks before the deadline. Organizations planning to apply to the Commission should put the panelists and Commissioners on their mailing lists.
2. Applicants submit completed application forms by the **April 1, 2014 deadline** (not a postmark deadline). NO EXCEPTIONS. The Commission will not accept any application materials via facsimile transmission or other electronic means (e.g. e-mail).
3. The Commission staff reviews each application for completeness and eligibility. Incomplete or ineligible applications will not be reviewed and will be returned to the applicant with a brief explanation.
4. Copies of the applications are sent to the members of the advisory panels.
5. The panelists independently review each application prior to the panel meeting.
6. Each advisory panel meets with two members of the Commission staff. Commissioners attend each panel meeting as observers. Applicant representatives may attend panel meetings as observers but may not make a presentation to the panel. The panels make their recommendations after group discussion. Names of Commissioners and advisory panelists, as well as dates and locations of Commission and panel meetings, are available from the Commission office and on the Commission website.
7. Following the panel meetings, the Commission staff makes a recommendation on each application.
8. The board of the Commission then reviews the recommendations of the panels and staff and takes final action on the applications. Names of Commissioners and advisory panelists, as well as dates and locations of Commission and panel meetings, are available from the Commission office and on the Commission website.
9. Applicants are notified of Commission action by mail the last week of June. The appeals process for applications not awarded funds can be found in the appeals section of the guidelines.
10. The Commission will pay 85 percent of each year's grant amount by September 15. The final 15 percent will be paid within 30 days after the Commission receives the final report on the grant. The Commission reserves the right to use an alternative payment schedule in special circumstances. Final reports must be submitted after the completion of all funded activities and before June 1st.

SUGGESTIONS TO APPLICANTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Check the Commission website (www.arts.virginia.gov) regularly for news, grant applications, deadlines, and report forms. Each year the Commission staff conducts application assistance workshops around the state to explain the different grant programs and application procedures. Applicants are encouraged to attend one of the workshops.

Applicants should read the “General Policies” section as well as the guidelines for a particular grant program. General Policies apply to all grantees of the Commission.

New applicants to the Commission should contact the Commission staff as soon as possible for information on application procedures.

In preparing grant applications, do not assume that the panelists know your organization first-hand. Tell your story and the impact you are hoping to achieve in as concise and compelling manner as possible. Include factual information to back up statements about your impact on the community.

Try not to use jargon, buzz words, and insider language in the proposal.

Applicants are responsible for complying with the instructions and Certification of Assurances attached to each application form.

Once an application is submitted to the Commission, inform the Commission promptly of any changes in the address, key personnel or other pertinent information about your grant application. If a grant is awarded, any substantive changes in the activities or budget described in the application must be approved in advance by the Commission staff.

Each applicant should include the names of the advisory panelists, the board members of the Commission, and the Commission staff on all mailing lists, and regularly notify them of activities and events. The addresses are available from the Commission office and on the Commission website. The panelist lists are updated each year.

The Commission staff will answer any questions about the grant programs, assist applicants in completing the forms, and review drafts of grant applications, if requested at least four weeks before the grant deadlines.

All advisory panel and Commission meetings are open to the public. Applicants and others may observe the meetings. The dates and locations of the meetings are available from the Commission office.

COMPLAINTS PERTAINING TO CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

Any person who believes that a grantee of the Virginia Commission for the Arts is not in compliance with either the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 may file a written complaint with the Executive Director of the Commission. The letter of complaint should include information about the dates, location, and specific aspects of the grantee’s activities that may not be in compliance.

The staff of the Commission will attempt to resolve the matter informally, if possible, by meeting with the grantee and the complainant.

If the staff of the Commission determines that the grantee is in full compliance with civil rights requirements, the Executive Director of the Commission will so inform the grantee and the complainant. If the staff of the Commission determines that the matter cannot be resolved informally, the matter will be brought to the board of the Commission for consideration of suspension or termination of funding.

APPEALS PROCESS FOR GRANT APPLICANTS

Applicants who believe their applications for funding were rejected for any of the following three reasons may appeal to the Commission for reconsideration:

1. The application was declined on the basis of review criteria other than those appearing in the guidelines;
2. The application was declined due to influence of advisory panel or Commission members who willfully failed to disclose conflicts of interest; or
3. The application was declined because erroneous information was provided by the staff, panelists, or Commission board members at the time of review, despite the fact that the applicant provided accurate and complete information on regulation forms as part of the standard application process.

Incomplete applications are specifically denied any appeals process. Dissatisfaction with the denial of an award or the amount of a grant award is not grounds for appeal.

Requests of appeals must be received, in writing, at the Commission office within 30 days of the applicant's notification of a funding award decision. The board of the Commission will review and act upon the appeal at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

If the board of the Commission changes a funding decision as a result of an appeal, the timing of the payment of the grant will be at the discretion of the agency's Executive Director.

APPEALS PROCESS FOR PUBLICATIONS

(Performing Arts Tour Directory and Artists in Education Artist Roster)

Applicants for either the Performing Arts Tour Directory or Artist Roster may appeal a decision not to be included in the Directory or on the Roster on the basis of the three reasons listed above. The same procedure is followed for these appeals with the exception that applicants have only 15 days from notification to file their appeals because of publication schedules. These appeals will be reviewed and acted upon by the Executive Committee of the Commission.

NOMINATIONS FOR ADVISORY PANELISTS

Role of Advisory Panels

The advisory panels of the Virginia Commission for the Arts make recommendations and give guidance that will affect the future of the arts in the Commonwealth. The quality and integrity of the Commission's decision-making depend upon the individual contributions of time, thought, and energy of these volunteers.

Nominations for Advisory Panels

The Commission staff keeps a file of nominations for the panels, and anyone can send in names at any time during the year. Each name remains on file for at least three years. Each nomination should include a brief description of the individual's experience in the arts, an address, and a telephone number. An individual may nominate him or herself.

Who is Eligible for the Panels?

- individual artists in all disciplines
- artistic directors of arts institutions
- curators and museum directors
- heads of performing arts presenting series
- managers of arts institutions
- board leaders of arts institutions
- college faculty in the visual arts, music, theatre, dance, and creative writing
- folklorists
- managers of individual performers and touring companies
- arts educators, school administrators, teachers, and PTA/PTO representatives
- writers and editors
- community leaders with an understanding of the role of the arts in their communities

Panelists Should:

- have in-depth knowledge in a field of the arts
- regularly attend a wide variety of arts events in their communities
- be articulate and willing to offer opinions in public
- be able to work in a committee setting
- be willing to contribute the time necessary to review grant applications and to understand the Commission programs and policies
- be able to attend a one or two day panel meeting

Selection of the Panelists

The board of the Virginia Commission for the Arts approves the list of nominees for the advisory panels annually. The Commission staff invites the panelists to serve, attempting to balance each panel with different types of knowledge about the arts. Each panel should include geographic and racial diversity.

Panels

The Commission has different panels for the different grant categories, including:

- seven regional multi-disciplinary panels that review applications from arts organizations for operating support and from all types of not-for-profit organizations for special initiatives in the arts
- a statewide multi-disciplinary panel to review applications from large budget arts organizations for operating support
- a statewide multi-disciplinary panel to review applications from performers to be included in the Tour Directory
- a statewide arts in education panel that reviews applications for Artists in Education Grants
- a statewide panel to review Artist Fellowship applications

Send Your Nominations for the Panels to:

Virginia Commission for the Arts
1001 East Broad Street, Suite 330
Richmond, Virginia 23219
by email: arts@arts.virginia.gov

Include contact information for the individual(s) nominated for the panels and either a bio or a few sentences about the person's experience in the arts.

MAP OF ADVISORY PANEL REGIONS

